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ABSTRACT

This paper outlines the teaching and research program in language and education at the University of Southampton (England) and examines problem areas found in the combination of language and education, including confusion in interpretation of textual material by students. Language and education often involves language teaching, but not language, per se. The nature of language and education is examined in the classroom, in policy, and in teacher education. It is argued that language is intimately bound up with the process of education, at all levels, and that teachers and administrators need to be sensitive to this union and need to be informed about the way language operates in society. (Contains 28 references.) (NAV)

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Is Language Education? or is Education Language?

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IS LANGUAGE EDUCATION? or IS EDUCATION LANGUAGE?

Christopher Brumfit

The title of this lecture reflects the description of the Chair to which I was appointed in 1984. There is not, to my knowledge, another Chair in the country which specifically concerns itself with the general field of Educational Studies combined with the particular field of Language. Part of my purpose today, then, is to outline a teaching and research programme, for the role of language in education has been rather less developed as an area than several others whose claim to consideration is no stronger than that of language or linguistics. At the same time, a lecture such as this can do no more than indicate briefly a selection of the major areas in which language has a role to play in education. The questions posed in the title can only be partially answered in any case, partly because they need more precise formulation if they are to address themselves to genuine research issues and partly because a great deal of research remains to be done before a clear picture of the role of language in education can be developed. This lecture will examine some problem areas, with the intention of clarifying the questions enough to suggest why answers cannot be easily given.

ACADEMIC STUDIES AND EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

'Language' and 'Education' share two disadvantages that many other areas of study avoid – they are both too familiar. We all use language – and many of us have strong views about it; we have all been educated – and we all have strong views about that. Expertise confronts experience and people must be bold to defend their own expertise against others' experience.

Yet language is full of puzzles that experience alone cannot solve – and one of the greatest of these is its relationship with the whole educational process. Indeed, the arrangement of an inaugural lecture itself seems to be a carefully erected memorial to the relationship between education and language. What, after all, could be more of a memorial to language than a lecture, a text of dead words written to be spoken as if living – and what could be more of a memorial to education than a ritual recitation by an elderly person in mediaeval dress intoned to a silent gathering of fellow-mourners? Typically, the inauguration of a new professor is celebrated in a rite of words; typically, too, for education, some would cynically say, they are words that cannot be interrupted or debated. Yet no one who has experienced education in any form will doubt the major role that language plays in the practice of educational institutions. The desirability of this can be disputed, but we must concede the fact.

Let me start with an example which does not reflect the major preoccupations of linguistics. Nonetheless, Figure 1 shows a text that typifies some of our problems. This is a written text, but its message is puzzling and opaque. It is a genuine piece of evidence – the notes of one of my previous MA students for her essay answer to an examination question, on the role of language in teacher education, as it happens. But what kind of language is this itself? How does a student arrive at such an independent and idiosyncratic piece of literacy? What is the relationship between this and the normal language (and the normal education) she has received? Discussion with the student reveals that she associates images she has sketched with concepts to be used in the essay, but the associations are unique to herself, depending on contingent events in her own personal history. Yet this private 'language' illustrates one aspect of normal language which is little discussed – the ways in which

the concepts represented in language possess rich associations that are purely personal to individuals. Lurking behind the shared code of 'normal' language lies a second code of personal associations, like those illustrated here – only partially perceived, even by the writers or speakers themselves.

Much has been studied and written on the relationship between language and learning, but we need to remember that, for every generalisation we attempt to make, there will be thousands of individuals using language for their own purposes, with their own devices and methods, confounding our general and abstract pronouncements with their own precise and concrete instances. As in any exploration centred on human beings, the fact of self-consciousness destabilises the data and confuses the questioner. Certainty becomes the enemy of truth.

The risks that are being hinted at here can be more explicitly illustrated by considering the relationship between any descriptive discipline and a social and institutionalised practice, such as education. Education is specifically concerned with intervention by one part of society in the lives of others. Such intervention is meant to be positive rather than negative, and safeguards of various kinds are provided to ensure that unsatisfactory intervention is avoided. But the mechanisms for intervening and the mechanisms for safeguarding are themselves part of the process of education and have to be taken into account when the relationship between research and practice is examined.

Educational Studies concerns itself with endeavours to improve the quality of education provision in two related ways. First, the attempt to understand processes of education, in general and in particular, is needed in order to inform discussion of educational policy. When it works successfully, this activity should lead to more sensitive policy-making at local and national levels, and to improved methods of teaching particular areas of the curriculum. Second, the attempt to develop appropriate teaching procedures, through experimentation with new materials and techniques, leads simultaneously to criticism of current models of learning and teaching, and to greater support for the teaching profession in its task within the educational system. Thus, development, enquiry, improvement and critique operate simultaneously and interactively.

This is, of course, an idealised picture, though it is difficult to see how we can afford to be content with much less. And, indeed, it does seem to be a realisable ideal, as long as researchers, teachers, advisers, material writers and other practitioners can interchange roles, collaborate and have effective administrative support for such close relationships. At the same time though, we should not minimise the epistemological difficulties associated with achievement of such integration.

A rich and complex area of human activity, such as education, cannot be treated as if understanding and explanation suffice to cause desirable change. Indeed, the current state of British schools cannot be attributed in any simple way to a desire that they should be, even approximately, as they are. Yet the complex task of understanding any aspect of education can in principle be separated from the task of implementing change. What is crucial is the mediation process, by which understanding from a variety of relevant disciplines is integrated to the needs of particular teachers and administrators, in particular positions, in particular schools.

Some recent controversies in language teaching illustrate the problems which emerge. There is, for example, a strong research tradition in second language acquisition studies, which maintains that learners of foreign languages acquire them

in predictable ways. Studies of learners in different sets of conditions have suggested that generalisations can be made about the order in which certain language forms tend to appear and such studies have resulted in substantial debate on their implications for linguistics and pedagogic practice (Davies, Criper and Howatt, 1984). But the usefulness of such studies can easily be exaggerated. Observations about the tendencies of learners can give us a general orientation for discussions of teaching; they cannot tell us how to teach specific groups of learners in any detail, because we have no way of knowing the relevance of such studies to particular learners until we know the conditions determining who is where on the scale of these tendencies – a collective tendency, however well attested, tells us nothing about the potential behaviour of an individual. Similarly, advocates of 'telling' pupils in English classes about (e.g.) the English writing system (Stubbs, 1986, 229) or of listing objectives for teaching English (HMI, 1984) are oversimplifying the effect of such apparent reliance on a transmission model of learning. Not only is the direct transmission model widely rejected, but the impact of desirable reforms on the teaching profession as an institution is lessened if they are presented without regard for the preconceptions of those who have to implement them. Because of this, it makes more sense to talk about the 'implications' of theory and research for practice than the 'applications'. Theory and research have to be digested by teachers and converted to something which works in their particular institutions and with the people who teach and study them. And this applies equally to other areas where language studies impinge on education. But to justify this argument it will be necessary to summarise current views on the nature of language.

THE NATURE OF LANGUAGE

'Language' has always been an object of interest to scholars outside linguistics itself. Literary theorists and literary critics, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists have all persistently concerned themselves with language. What is remarkable in the last twenty years has been the degree of consensus over the nature of language that has emerged in education from a diverse range of theoretical perspectives. While linguistics has in some traditions moved away from language located in the world towards increasingly abstract cognitive models, educational linguists and others concerned with areas traditionally regarded as applied linguistics have found themselves turning more towards the other language-interested disciplines. Indeed, it sometimes appears as if serious research into contextualised language activity is prevented from developing by the dominance of linguistic research concerned with idealisations which remove language from any systematic relationship with users or their purposes.

But other traditions within linguistics have fed the movement towards more socially sensitive language awareness. As descriptive linguists concern themselves with meaning and move into discourse analysis and pragmatics, so they intersect with the concerns of researchers from other disciplines. Attempts deriving from anthropology to analyse speech events in relation to factors such as participant roles, settings and topics (Hymes, 1967) have begun the systematisation of the interplay between language and social environment. At the same time, sociolinguistic studies have demonstrated the ways in which syntactic or phonological rules may be observably adjusted according to the status or social position of users (Labov, 1972).

These studies have been essentially descriptive in intention. Social psychologists, however, have provided the beginnings of accounts of the motivation of such systematic changes. Giles (1977) has suggested that there is a clear disposition to

converge on the language of interlocutors where there is goodwill and to diverge where there is antagonism. A number of studies in areas of ethnic or cultural conflict (for example, Wales, Belgium and Canada) have shown that negative relations with outsiders cause speakers unconsciously to increase the dialect features of their locality away from the metropolitan mode to the local, while positive relations with outsiders promote a decrease of such localisation. Such evidence accords with Grice's conversational maxims (Grice, 1975), which are based on the view that a prime function of conversation is to maximise communication. To this end, features which might cause confusion in communication will be reduced wherever there is a desire for effective communication, but increased where the intention is to obscure rather than to clarify. There is evidence that children perceive language markers very early (Day, 1982, suggests that by the age of three they have clear in- and out-group perceptions based on the speech of those they hear), and Reid (1978) and Romaine (1984) produce data which indicates that adolescents have very definite ideas about the social significance of differing language forms. Thus, language behaviour combines perceptions of group membership and identity with judgements about the degree of communication to strive for.

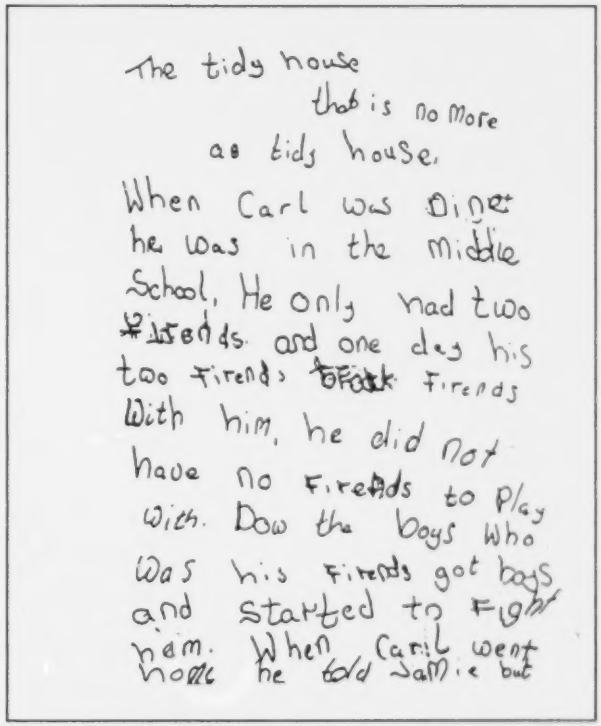
Such studies reinforce our awareness of the sensitivity and variability of language. The range of associations which may be acquired by any specific symbol available to us is immense and these associations may be private or public. All families have their own private associations, as well as a certain number of vocabulary items peculiar to themselves. These associations may become highly wrought artefacts and spill over into literature and the public domain, as with the juvenile writings of the Brontës or Isherwood's early fantasies. Equally, they may remain private and intensely local in range. But the potential scope for interaction between the private and the public is infinite. Every utterance has an internal and an external history, and the speaker or writer will only be aware of a small part of either of these. Because the overlap in experience of a particular language item or language event is incomplete for each speaker and listener, misunderstanding or legitimate alternative interpretation is constantly possible. And constellations of personal experience build up into ideologies, patterns of belief that underlie whole modes of human activity, binding the behaviour patterns of groups who identify themselves as cultures – physicists or stamp collectors, educationalists or readers of Kafka, Jehovah's Witnesses or structuralists, undertakers or DES officials or pastry cooks. There is no group too important or too trivial to bond linguistically and form a temporary culture, with its own characteristic linguistic forms and its own (for the moment) shared assumptions.

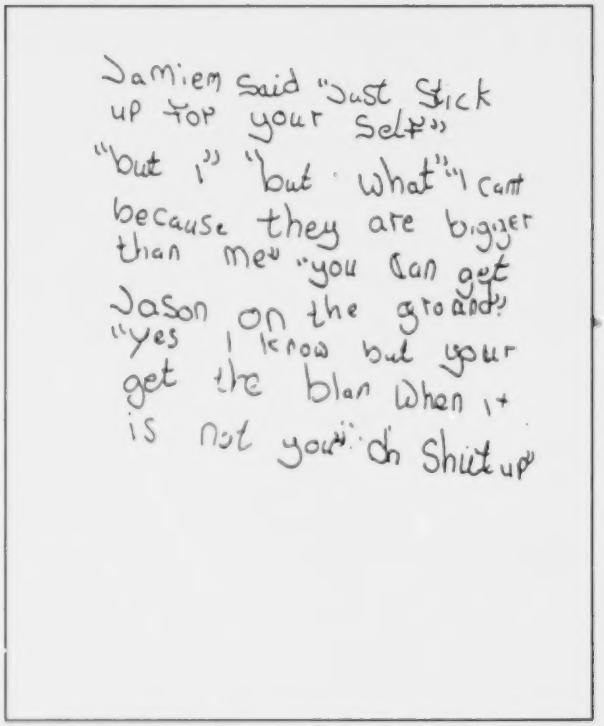
It is important to emphasize the variety (and the frequent superficiality) of our linguistic and cultural associations, because there is a strong tendency to see both language and culture as relatively solid and unnegotiable, and the relations between them as fixed. Yet education, above all other social forces, is concerned with establishing the mutability of culture and the languages that reflect and contribute to it. We have to operate within the linguistic system we receive, otherwise we shall not communicate. But we are never its prisoner and learning to transcend our current language to perceive and contribute to future communicative and conceptual capacities is the self-educational task for each of us. To make sense of this process, we have to try to locate language in some of its rich context.

LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM

Let me try to illustrate this principle with a simple example. Steedman (1982) devotes a whole book to a remarkable analysis of a collaborative story produced by three eight-year-old primary school girls. The passage quoted (Figure 2) is, in fact, the sole

Figure 2


The tidy house
that is no more
a tidy house.
When Carl was Diner
he was in the middle
School, He only had two
Firends and one day his
two Firends ~~Frack~~ Firends
With him, he did not
have no Firends to play
with. Dow the boys who
was his Firends got boys
and started to Fight
him. When Carl went
home he told Jamie but


Jamiem said "Just Stick
up for your Self"
"but I" "but what" "I cant
because they are bigger
than me" "you can get
Jason on the ground"
"yes I know but your
get the blan When it
is not you" "Oh Shut up"

Carolyn Steedman. The Tidy House (1982): 213–214. London: Virago.

interpolation by a fourth girl into the lengthy and eventually incomplete story. Steedman comments about this episode:

> When the girls worked together in writing, they operated by a model of social life that demonstrated to them more cohesion and co-operation between men. There were pressures on the boys to act aggressively and to display their conflict with each other, though the girls too were usually told to hit back. When Lisa, who joined the three writers of 'The Tidy House' after several days of diplomatic approaches, wrote a portion of the text, she had the character Jamie tell her nine-year-son Carl to fight back in the playground. This scene echoed many conversations with all the children throughout the year, in which they would patiently explain to me, yet again, that, whilst the school's most stringently enforced rule forbade fighting, they had been told by their parents to hit back ... The passage by Lisa mirrored her own very recent experience. She had had two close friends, Carla and Melissa. They had gone to nursery school together, walked back and forth together, sat together and played in the streets together through five long years. The arrival of Lindie in the Spring had destroyed the balance of this old friendship. Admitted back into the fold towards the end of the week, the constraints of the plot that Lisa was faced with and the gender of the child character she had to write about meant that there was no alternative but to write of herself as Carl, the boy (Steedman, 1982: 136–137).

The point is not whether this was in some sense a 'true' account of what motivated the writing, rather it is that some similar account to this had to be true. Writing of this kind is necessarily reflecting a complex of personal and conventional attributes, which must be recognised and responded to (but which may not be precisely identified) by any primary teacher or, indeed, in another sense, by any reader. For the writer, the conventions of school writing, of children's literature and of parental expectations all converge in this one short episode, in addition to the conventions demanded by the existing lengthy text which was already available. This was simultaneously a public and a private act, as imaginative writing often is. To assign it an exact role in the educational process would be like asking the exact role of each blade of grass in a lawn. Yet few people would wish to deny that the role of such writing in the process of personal development is important.

If we are to make sense of language use in education, then the interpretation of meaning is at least as important as the interpretation of form. Yet the interpretation of meaning will never be an objective activity, for meaning depends not only on the context and the conventions appropriately deployed to match the context, but also on the interpretations of those who read or listen and the intentions of those who speak. It is widely recognised that together we make our meanings, but less widely accepted that we cannot be fully aware of the meanings that we make. Language operates rather like action painters drawing their colours from a moving palette and spraying them back at it; we take our meanings from the language, but, by the time we are ready to return them, the language has subtly shifted. None of us speaks the same language twice, any more than we drive exactly the same route twice.

Such recognition of language as necessarily in flux, reflecting the movement and life of the minds that use it, enables us to see language activity in the education system as a process of working rather than a product of learning. Recent developments in second language acquisition research make it difficult to see even the learning of foreign languages as distinct from the process of language use – learning is using and using is learning (see, from different perspectives, Stevick, 1976; Krashen, 1981;

Brumfit, 1984). Of course, there are formal activities also associated with the learning – people learn vocabulary lists off by heart more than is commonly acknowledged – but these activities are preliminary to the language learning process itself, for only when the language items are fused into active meaning systems by the process of use is the language system developing for the learner's own purposes.

Learning new concepts and developing new capacities is thus frequently realised through the development of new language and the development of new language must be realised through the development of meaning. Other systems than language may, of course, perform similar functions, but, in literate societies especially, links between education and literacy are so close that language will remain the dominant code for the foreseeable future.

LANGUAGE POLICY

So far we have been concerned mainly with language in the general educational process. Some commentators, indeed, have come close to arguing that the general educational process is essentially a matter of playing the appropriate language games. Hirst, for example, associates the development of concepts with 'the symbols of our common languages' (Hirst, 1974: 83), so that education may become the interplay between the appropriate language forms that we are socialised to produce by schooling and the ideas that emerge from the context which language both creates and responds to.

Whatever position we take though, language is clearly important enough to require specific consideration. There is not time here to explore all the implications for a policy for language in education, but one major strand may be appropriately described.

Arising out of the awareness (discussed above) of language as variable and adaptable to users' needs has developed an increasing recognition of Britain as a multidialectal and multilingual society. A variety of forces have contributed to this, ranging from the concerns of those in the inner-cities to avoid alienation of minority groups by the pursuit of policies in language work which inadvertently reinforce racism, to the increasing sensitivity to language variation in mainstream discussion and the serious addressing of issues of language (and other) variation that emerges from the movement towards a common curriculum forced by comprehensivisation of secondary schools. Thus, it begins to make sense to demand certain minimum language 'rights' for all learners in state education. I have developed this theme elsewhere and will only refer to it in summary (for justification of these recommendations, see Brumfit, 1989).

A minimum requirement for all learners would be:

(i) development of mother tongue or dialect;

(ii) development of competence in a range of styles of English for educational, work-based, social and public life purposes;

(iii) development of knowledge of the nature of language in a multilingual society, including some basic acquaintances with at least two languages from the total range of languages available in education or in the local community;

(iv) development of a fairly extensive practical competence in at least one language other than their own.

This minimal set of requirements may look initially puzzling and over-ambitious – and, indeed, it is necessary to accept that each local authority and each school will have to determine its own priorities, within the scope of its own funding, for the first requirement particularly. Nonetheless, the case for all of these is very strong if linguistic resources are to be adequately exploited and learning adequately developed. Nor are the requirements very far from what is widely advocated elsewhere. The Swann Report on the education of ethnic minority children (Swann, 1985) expects schools to be as positive as possible towards the first; the second has been advocated by the last two Secretaries of State for Education and is accepted by most English teachers as one of their aims; parts of the third are currently being investigated by the Kingman Inquiry into the teaching of English, set up earlier this year by the Secretary of State; and the last has been incorporated into recent DES documentation on the core curriculum and into HMI recommendations on foreign languages.

But these initiatives have not been co-ordinated into a package that has overall coherence and there are major implications for teacher education. Many teachers will find themselves engaged in work with multilingual classes and an awareness of children's and adults' capacities to cope with language issues is a necessary prerequisite to successful teaching. Consider Figure 3.

This dialogue illustrates (in a fairly unsophisticated form) one teacher's attempt to come to grips with what is happening when a native speaker encounters a non-native speaker in school. Even at this level, conscious exploration of this data by the teacher is likely to sensitise her to many of the language processes that we take for granted in both children and adults. The trouble is that it is still rare for work like this to be carried out and far rarer for any more sophisticated analysis to be developed. Language, as distinct from Language Teaching, is still explicitly addressed only rarely in teacher education.

LANGUAGE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

The relatively weak position of language in teacher education is one result of the structure of teacher education in this country. The great expansion of the 1960s was accompanied by a certain amount of claim-staking by particular disciplines for a 'foundation' role in the training of teachers (Tibble, 1966; Hirst, 1983). Psychology, sociology, history and philosophy all established themselves in strong positions. It remains an arguable point whether education benefited from the fact that linguistics emerged as a fashionable subject just after the partition of the field. Perhaps language studies benefited, for there is a widespread dissatisfaction with the divide between disciplines and the practice of teaching (though the problem will be resolved more by giving reasonable time to the high-level training of teachers than by trying to reorganise the inadequate time currently available). Whatever the position, language activity is divided in teacher education across a range of possible courses, none of which has language as a prime focus and none of which is obliged to deal with language at all. Nor, indeed, can we say that teachers typically receive high level training in language work. A survey which I have just completed for the National Congress on Languages in Education, which involved sending a detailed questionnaire to nearly a hundred and fifty institutions concerned with teacher education in the United Kingdom, including all state training institutions, revealed, for universities that replied, the returns found in Figure 4. It is clear from these that we cannot by any means guarantee that all teachers will have any explicit awareness of the nature of the language that is so important in their classrooms. Nor do recent

Figure 3

Overheard in a Playground:
A Conversation between Child A and Child B

Child B	Child A	What A is doing
	Have you got your strong shoes?	
I have got on my shoes.	*Yes, but your shoes. The shoes that don't let . . . that don't get your feet wet.*	EXPLAINING the meaning of 'strong'. REPHRASING to make a phrase simpler.
My feet not wet.	*Do you like to jump in puddles?*	FINDING ALTERNATIVE ways of putting over her idea.
Puddles?	*Puddles – water on the floor.*	EXPLAINING 'puddles'.
No, I get wet. My feet wet.	*Your feet get wet? Not wet now? Have you got your . . . plimsolls?*	MATCHING the 'telegraphese' of B – not wet now/ put plimsolls on.
Plimsolls?	*If your feet get wet, you put plimsolls on . . . like in there – in the hall!*	
My feet?	*If your feet GET wet. Plimsolls on* (demonstrating wildly).	STRESSING WORDS. USING GESTURE.
I don't know.	*Ask Mrs. M.*	
Mrs. M.? Why?	*She's outside – the teacher outside.*	
What she say? (laughing)	*What WOULD she say* (correcting her).	CORRECTING her directly.
She tells the boys not fight.	*No, B. She tell the boys not TO fight.*	JUDGING how much to correct – one thing at a time!

Hilary Hester. Learning from Children Learning. In: Christopher Brumfit, Rod Ellis and Josie Levine (Eds). English as a Second Language in the United Kingdom, 1985: 56. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Figure 4

'LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION'
ON UNIVERSITY PGCE COURSES
(ALL STUDENTS)

University	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*	*7*	*8*	*9*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*13*	*14*	*15*	*16*
Compulsory Course/Hours	–	–	–	4–10	4–10	6	10	–	3	2	15	3½	20+	–	20+	–
Optional Course/Hours	20	–	10–20	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	10+	–	–
No. of Tutors	1	–	5	–	4	2	1	–	1	1	5	19	5	1	2	–
of which–																
No. of Full-Time Language in Education	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	1	1	3	–	1	–
No. with Qualification	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	1	–	2	1	2	–

surveys of the knowledge of language of undergraduates or teachers in training suggest that these figures conceal widespread understanding rather than ignorance (Bloor, 1986).

So much for the position in secondary university teacher training, where, if anywhere, the most academically sophisticated teachers should be found.

But there is another, perhaps slightly more contentious, dimension to this story, for language has customarily been the concern of English teachers. Curiously, English teachers do not automatically have any direct training in understanding of language at all. Some degree courses do include some work on language; many do not include anything on contemporary linguistics, sociolinguistics or psycholinguistics, to mention only three areas of direct relevance to the classroom. Nor, indeed, does 'linguistics' have a good name with English teachers (though to what extent that reflects an out-of-date model of what linguistics and especially applied linguistics is, to what extent it reflects the failures of undergraduate linguistics courses to convince students of the excitement and relevance of the discipline and to what extent it is simply fear of a scientific approach is difficult to determine – probably there are elements of all three). But the fact remains that the prime teachers of 'language' in our schools frequently, perhaps usually, have no specific knowledge of this field at all.

The difficulty is that this leaves a camouflaged trap. "We have qualified 'English' teachers – they are concerned with 'language' – therefore, we have qualified 'language' teachers" is the false syllogism. What we, in fact, have is an incapacity to provide sensitivity about language as a social instrument, except at an amateur level. I doubt whether this can be said about any other major area of the curriculum. Even one-year full-time courses are few and far between – and, of course, the weight of the profession lies heavily with those who are understandably committed to the three years of full-time literary study that has provided them with the academic basis for their English teaching. It is difficult to see how the necessary expertise for basic work in this area can be achieved by less than the equivalent of one year's full-time study.

Yet it is important to see that this is not a conflict between 'arid science and humane creativity', to quote one English teacher in a discussion group I was in at a recent conference. Language work in education has to recognise the potential impact of literature, the need to write for personal pleasure and language as a means of personal identity. Anyway, of course, 'humane creativity' can become arid in its own way, as Gorky observed:

> When he was away from a book, its influence remained with him. He saw reality through the dust of centuries and built up a barricade of book-lore to hold off disturbing thoughts (Maxim Gorky: The Life of Matvei Kozhemyakin, 1911).

To experience language without imaginative response is to impoverish it, but so too is to experience language without intellectual rigour. Language is, in fact, the cheapest scientific data available to schools – and pupils, in my experience, invariably enjoy thinking about it, as a socially significant system and as an abstract system alike.

We have tried to argue then that language is intimately bound up with the process of education, at all levels, and that teachers and administrators need to be sensitive to this and informed about the way language operates in society. We have also argued, in passing, that explicit language responsibilities require a policy for all learners

about what they are entitled to expect – and that all teachers require some knowledge of language – and teachers of English particularly (though of other languages too) require specific work on language if they are not to mislead the public about their own expertise.

But I said at the beginning of this lecture that it was a programmatic lecture – what is the programme?

In the Department of Education, we have already begun to systemise slightly the work on language and communication in the initial training of teachers, though a one-year course with more than a term teaching in schools and many DES-required content commitments gives us little time to play with. We have also established a full-time Master's Field of Study in this area, which it is hoped should give us the solid basis from which to develop further courses (though new in-service funding arrangements make it difficult for such courses to have the impact they should have). The newly-formed Centre for Language in Education provides a structure through which the Faculty of Educational Studies can link with colleagues in schools and in other Faculties to consider the whole activity of communication in educational settings, including work in literature, drama and media studies, as well as in language. And it is hoped that examination of the results of the large survey referred to above will enable us to develop work to fill further gaps that are revealed.

The potential research programme could be much greater than that in teaching – but funding is almost impossible to obtain for classroom-based research that is not seen as central to the immediate policy purposes of government – and the questions I asked in the title of the lecture are fated to remain unanswered it seems. Language is, of course, much more than education; education is much more than language; yet neither can be extricated from the other, each entails the other. The research we pursue will explore the relationship between the two in normal classrooms. But it is likely to be on a smaller scale than desirable unless the funding situation changes.

In spite of funding problems, occasions such as this can, of course, create a false euphoria – and it seems sensible to conclude with two cautionary comments. The first is to note that this is not a new area and we cannot have the excitement of missionaries faced with a new civilisation to subvert and convert. Language work has always been pursued in education and the best practitioners have always thought hard about it. Nonetheless, Southampton has been the first university to recognise the need with a Chair – and it would be a pity for the academic opportunity to be wasted. The second point relates to our earlier discussion about English teachers. They have been rightly concerned about values in education, though they have been more limited in their interpretation of them than I would like. Nonetheless, we do have to ask what language work is for – and, when all the instrumental arguments have been laid aside, we do have to recognise that there is something fundamental about communication, whether oral or written, which is to do with our deepest impulses. Olive Schreiner, writing from South Africa over a hundred years ago, expresses this better than anyone else I have read:

> He read one page and turned over to the next; he read down that without changing his posture by an inch; he read the next and the next, kneeling up all the while, with the book in his hand and his lips parted.
>
> All he read he did not fully understand; the thoughts were new to him, but this was the fellow's startled joy in the book – the thoughts were his, they belonged to him. He had never thought them before, but they were his.

He laughed silently and internally, with the still intensity of triumphant joy.

So then all thinking creatures did not send up the one cry: 'As thou, dear Lord, has created things in the beginning, so are they now, so ought they to be, so will they be, world without end, and it doesn't concern us that they are. Amen.' There were men to whom not only kopjes and stones were calling out imperatively: 'What are we and how came we here? Understand us and know us' – but to whom even the old, old relations between man and man and the customs of the ages called, and could not be made still and forgotten.

The boy's heavy body quivered with excitement. So he was not alone, not alone.

(Olive Schreiner: The Story of an African Farm [Part One], 11, 1883)

Education needs language, so that we should not be alone.

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